caDSR Freestyle Search FAQs

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How is the Freestyle API used?

The API is packaged in this Subversion location. It contains a JAR file and a separate ZIP file with all available documentation in a JavaDoc format. This includes package descriptions, coding examples, and more in addition to the class and method references.

Is there a URL link I can use to display a Data Element?

Yes, if the CDE is public id 2625735, version 1.0, the format is: http://freestyle.nci.nih.gov/freestyle/do/cdebrowser?publicId=2625735&version=1.0

Now that I've written code to use the Freestyle API, how do I make it run?

The following steps are required to execute the API.

1. To simplify the first program, declare a main() method in your class and hard code specific values to the search.
2. After creating the new instance of the Search class, make the first method call setDataDescription("http://freestyle.nci.nih.gov"). This points to the NCICB Production server.
3. Decide which option settings are desired or go with the defaults. For a first test, the defaults are recommended.
4. Call the desired findReturning...() method using a known search term or phrase, e.g. "congestive heart failure", without the quotes.
5. Be sure the required additional JAR files are included on the classpath. These will vary slightly depending on the methods used.

A code example and details concerning the supporting JAR files are included in the JavaDoc for description of the Search package (https://ncisvn.nci.nih.gov/svn/files/trunk/freestylesearch/API/4.0.1/).

How can Freestyle be used without writing software?

A UI is provided at http://freestyle.nci.nih.gov and allows full exercise of the Search engine capabilities on the caDSR Production database. This is available to anyone without the need to login to the servers. The UI also provides a way for developers to test expected behavior independent of other software. Options selected in the UI map directly to the options available through the API.

How do I tell the Freestyle UI to search on a public id?

No distinctions are made about the source of the search data. Consequently, searching with a public id only requires the value. It isn't necessary to specify the attributes used in the search.

There are too many results from Freestyle, how do I make the list shorter?

Several techniques will reduce the results. The more search terms the more effect on the scoring (weight) of each result. Using the Options button, make the limit thresholds smaller, exclude the Test and/or Training Contexts, exclude RETIRED Administered Components, etc.

I sometimes get more results after adding more terms in Freestyle, why?

The search tries to match as many of the terms as possible and lets the weighting calculation determine the order. Entering more terms means there is a higher probability at least one of the terms will match. However, matches on multiple terms score higher and are presented first.

What is the wild card character in Freestyle?

There is no wild card character. Whether or not a match is made using the whole term or a partial string is controlled through the Options.

Are root words automatically used in Freestyle?

The search terms are used as entered. No option currently exists to compare based on roots. This is s Feature Request and is being reviewed and scheduled by the team.